



Capt. David Judson House c. 1750
Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

MARK THE DATES:

- November's General Membership Meeting: Saturday, November 17th at 2:00 pm at the Stratford Library
- Governing Board Meeting, Monday, January 7th, 1pm
- January's General Membership Meeting: Sunday, January 27th at 2:00 pm at the Stratford Library

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November's General Membership Meeting

November 17th, 2:00 pm, Stratford Library Lovell Room, 2203 Main Street

Beth Caruso will be discussing the first witches put to death in Connecticut. Beth worked hard, with other Windsor residents, to clear the names of the wrongly executed Windsor witches. Windsor's work on clearing the names of these good women may well be a model for us in Stratford to clear the name of Goody Bassett.

Author Beth M. Caruso grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio and spent her childhood writing puppet shows and witches' cookbooks. She became interested in French Literature and Hispanic Studies, receiving a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Cincinnati. She later obtained Masters degrees in Nursing and Public Health. Working as a Peace Corps volun-



Beth Caruso

Photo from
www.oneofwindsor.com

All meetings are free and open to the general public. Please bring a friend! Donations are gratefully accepted.

teer in Thailand, she helped to improve the public health of local Karen hill tribes. She also had the privilege to care for hundreds of babies and their mothers as a labor and delivery nurse. Largely influenced by an apprenticeship with herbalist and wild-crafter, Will Endres, in North Carolina, she surrounds herself with plants through gardening and native species conservation.

Her latest passion is to discover and convey important stories of women in American history. **One of Windsor** is her debut novel. She lives in New England with her awesome husband, amazing children, loyal puppy, and cuddly cats.

(Foregoing text from www.oneofwindsor.com).

History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation.

Julian Barnes, 2011

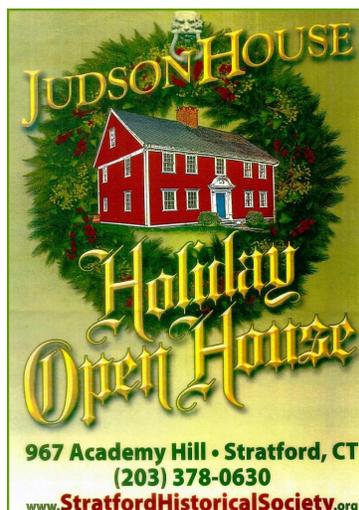
Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 1st, the Captain David Judson House built circa 1750 will be decorated with the spirit of the holidays. Christmas would not have been celebrated by the town's early settlers. Religious custom forbade it.

Christmas celebrations became popular in the Victorian age.

In this spirit we have remained true to our fore father's resourcefulness, using spices, nuts, Berries and greens to add a festive touch to our tours.

As you tour the house you will see many displays telling the origins of many holiday customs.



Our Junior Society will be stationed in the various rooms to tell you the history about many of the artifacts.

There will be crafts for children in the museum to make and take home. Carolers will be walking around the museum and house for your entertainment. For children there will be a scavenger hunt in the Judson House to find certain items, find them all and get a candy cane.

There will be raffles. Our gift shop will be open, with many unique gifts. Hours are 11am to 4pm. Admission: adults \$4-children \$2-under 5 free.

CLHO Seminar in Old Lyme



L to R: Barbara Firisin, David Wright, Carolyn Shannon, Shirley McCormack, Shirley Clevenger, Gail Liscio, and Pam Hutchinson at the Florence Griswold Museum.

September 18th found Barbara Firisin, David Wright, Carolyn Shannon, Shirley McCormack, Shirley Clevenger, Gail Liscio, Pam Hutchinson, and Sandy Rutkowski in Old Lyme attending a Connecticut League of History Organizations seminar entitled "**Fearless Financing and Fundraising Seminar.**"

The seminar was held at the Florence Griswold Museum. The seminar was designed to assist non-profit organizations meet the new requirements of IRS and government filings, and to provide ideas and suggestions for finding creative ways to finance non-profits.

While much of the information conveyed in the semi-

nar was meant for non-profit Treasurers and Finance boards, all attendees received a better understanding of just how much information is being required of non-profits by the government and the IRS.

The fundraising portion of the seminar stimulated discussion and repartee between attendees as to what fundraising techniques and activities have been tried. Successes were highlighted and failures were duly noted.

Those attending the seminar were able to lunch at the beautiful museum café on the banks of the Lieutenant River.

While time didn't permit attendees to experience much of the museum, or of the Florence Griswold home, previous

and subsequent visits to the Museum provided much information on the artists who stayed at the home at the turn of the twentieth century.

Florence Griswold's home is beautiful and filled with much artwork crafted by the artisans who stayed there. If you've not visited, it would be well worth your while to do so.



The Florence Griswold home.

Society Officers 2018-19

PRESIDENT	Gail Liscio	Building & Grounds	John Poole	Library	Gloria Duggan
VICE PRESIDENT	Tom Vos	Education	Dolores Hoctor	Membership	Melinda Acosta
RECORD. SEC'Y	Tina Vermette	Finance	Shirley McCormack	Newsletter	David Wright
CORR. SEC'Y	Carolyn Shannon	Gardens	James Shannon	Programs	Gail Liscio
TREASURER	Shirley Clevenger	Hospitality	Pam Hutchinson	Publicity	David Wright
Accessions/(Curator)	Carol Lovell	Hosts/Hostesses	Barbara Firisin	Scholarships	Shirley McCormack



William Samuel Johnson Day

As part of the town's 300th anniversary celebration in 1939, the Stratford Town Council passed the following resolution on February 14th.

WHEREAS: William Samuel Johnson, born on October 7, 1727 in the Town of Stratford, has not been given proper and legal recognition by said Town of Stratford for his part in the formation of the Constitution of the United States of America since the 1940s, and,

WHEREAS: William Samuel Johnson was in fact one of the two signers of the said Constitution of these United States of America on behalf of the people of Connecticut, and,

WHEREAS: William Samuel Johnson, Stratford's illustrious citizen, not only signed this great document for the State of Connecticut but was also the first man to ever read the Constitution of these United States to a public assembly, reporting as chairman of the committee of the Constitutional convention which drew up

the document, and,

WHEREAS: William Samuel Johnson, was in fact a Legislator from Stratford to the first Connecticut General Court, a Senator from Connecticut to the United States Congress and his body now lies buried in the old Christ Church Cemetery, and

WHEREAS: Proper recognition should be given by the Town of Stratford to this man who played such an important part in the formation of these United States of America, now therefor, be it,

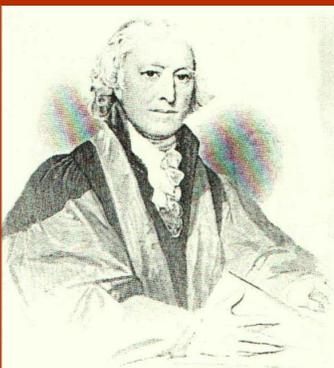
RESOLVED: That October 7, 1939 and October 7, of each year there-after shall be designated as a legal holiday in the Town of Stratford so that the Town may pay fitting and lasting tribute to the memory of William Samuel Johnson.

Over the next few years, the William Samuel Johnson holiday began to conflict with the Columbus Day holiday and created a hardship on the operation of the town. On November 10th, 1947, the Town

Council rescinded the holiday declared in 1939.

The unintended consequence of the rescission was that the Town no longer regularly celebrated the William Samuel Johnson legacy. The Society has made a formal presentation, and recommendation, to the Town Council that William Samuel Johnson Day be once more observed in Stratford.

While the Society has not suggested the day be a town-wide holiday, we have suggested that the day be formally observed with a flag raising at Town Hall, and some type of observance at Stratford's schools. The Town Council has taken the recommendation under advisement, and we hope to be formally marking William Samuel Johnson Day, again, beginning in October of 2019. We're expecting the Town Council to pass a revised resolution to this effect in the near future.



William Samuel Johnson at approximately age 60 from "*In Pursuit of Paradise.*"

Dateline Stratford October - November 1953

Sunday Herald
October 4, 1953

"LOANED RANGER," the annual variety show produced by Stratford High School Student Council, takes place Oct. 23 and 24 in the North Parade auditorium.

Nolan Grano is directing the presentation, which is under the musical direction of Edward Ryglewicz.

Serving on the committees are Mimi Nicol, Gil Thorne, Betty Chisholm, Nancy Schaab, Natalie Moorhouse, Lois Shaw, Nancy Doyle, Shirley Jankowich, Pat Greenwood, Florence Hudak, Marcia Luz, Mary Ellen Skene and Gert Karwin.

The Hartford Courant
October 11, 1953

Lodge Moves to Bring New Plant to Stratford

Gov. Lodge in a letter Saturday to William H. Mortensen, chairman of the Connecticut State Development Commission, urged him to continue "on an intensified and expanded basis" efforts to locate the new Sikorsky Aircraft plant in Stratford...

The Governor also pointed to UAC's record of "a constructive civic interest in the welfare of those communities" in which divisions are located. "This would be similarly evident in the Stratford community."

The Hartford Courant
October 17, 1953
Informing You

...It looks as though Lawrence Langner's plans for a Shakespearian theater in Stratford (same name as birthplace, in England, of Will Shakespeare) will be an actuality. Promise of the land seems virtually assured. The plan is to turn time back in its flight and build a replica of the Globe Theater, where Will's

plays were first tried out.

The Hartford Courant
October 18, 1953
Sikorsky Plant Wanted by Five Other States

..."At least five other states are frantically bidding for the \$17,500,000 helicopter manufacturing plant that Sikorsky hopes to build in Stratford..." "If any of them are successful, it is inevitable that the present operation in Bridgeport also will be shifted out of Connecticut, because Sikorsky wants to consolidate management."

The Hartford Courant
October 25, 1953
Stratford Woman Has Second Set of Twins

BRIDGEPORT. Oct. 25 (AP) - Daniel B. DuFresne of Stratford wouldn't believe it tonight when they told him his wife gave birth to their second set of twins in less than a year and a half.

"Aw, cut it out," he said. Joseph and John were born July 4, 1952. Daniel and Donald came tonight.

The Hartford Courant
November 18, 1953
Approves Theater Damages

In a third opinion Tuesday, the high court ordered further proceedings in a suit brought by Stratford Theater, Inc., against the Town of Stratford for damages because a sewer overflowed into the theater.

In the original trial, Common Pleas Court Judge Sidney Johnson awarded nominal damages of \$35 to the theater. The Supreme Court opinion, written by Associate Justice Raymond E. Baldwin, said the theater is entitled to substantial damages.

The Hartford Courant
November 21, 1953

Justice Baldwin

Associate Supreme Court Justice and Mrs. Raymond E. Baldwin have purchased a lot on Moseley Terrace and will move to Glastonbury from Stratford in the Spring when the Cape Cod house is expected to be completed.

The Hartford Courant
November 25, 1953

Woman Seen Sole Holdout Against Sikorsky Plant

One woman property owner may still fight plans of the Sikorsky Division of United Aircraft Corp. to build a \$17,500,000 helicopter plan in Stratford.

That was the report made Tuesday night by William H. Mortensen of Hartford, chairman of the State Development Commission. Mortensen said when the case is called in Bridgeport Superior Court this morning, the original group of 55 property owners who opposed construction of the plan will probably be reduced to Mrs. Theodore H. Krueger. Mrs. Krueger owns a house, two garages and 15 acres of land located one mile from the proposed Sikorsky site.

The Stratford News
November 27, 1953
Historical Group Meeting Friday

The regular bimonthly meeting of the Stratford Historical Society will be held in the Boothe Memorial building, Putney at 8 p.m. on Friday, November 27th. Harold M. Sturges will preside at the business meeting preceding the program.

Miss Lucy McCabe, Program chairman has announced that Donald Sammis of the Underwood corporation will speak on "History of Connecticut Industry."

Following the meeting, a social hour will be held...



Robbins Barstow, Eloise Carter, and Mary Titus at Teacher Awards Dinner, *The Stratford News*, October 1, 1953



John Cochrane, Dr. Charles Chaffee, Donald Fowler, John Ruziskey, *The Stratford News*, October 8, 1953.



Betsy Herb, Tony Musante, Shirley Jankowich, Nancy Ma-laun, Faye Emerson, Mrs. Alexander Chatin. *The Stratford News*, October 15, 1953.

Now Showing October - November 1953



Stratford Theater c 1946

October 4th	<i>Island in the Sky</i>	John Wayne, Lloyd Nolan
October 11th	<i>Houdini</i>	Tony Curtis, Janet Leigh
October 18th	<i>Roman Holiday</i>	Gregory Peck, Audrey Hepburn
October 25th	<i>East of Sumatra</i>	Jeff Chandler, Marilyn Monroe
November 1st	<i>Little Boy Lost</i>	Bing Crosby, Claude Dauphin
November 8th	<i>A Lion Is in the Streets</i>	James Cagney, Barbara Hall
November 15th	<i>Blowing Wild</i>	Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck
November 22nd	<i>So Big</i>	Jane Wyman, Sterling Hayden
November 29th	<i>Botany Bay</i>	Allan Ladd Patricia Medina, James Mason

Liberty Day 1918



President Wilson encouraged the nation to observe Columbus Day 1918 as Liberty Day with the following proclamation: "...Now, therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, do appoint Saturday, the 12th day of October, 1918, as Liberty Day. On that day I request the citizens of every community of the United States, city, town and countryside to celebrate the discovery of our country in order to stimulate a generous response to the Fourth Liberty Loan. Commemorative addresses, pageants, harvest home festivals or other demonstrations should be arranged for in every neighborhood under the general direction of the Secretary of the Treasury and the immediate

direction of the Liberty Loan Committee, in co-operation with the United States Bureau of Education and the public school authorities."

Stratford responded in her own understated manner, one day early, so as not to conflict with Bridgeport's celebration on October 12th.

Bridgeport Herald October 13, 1918 Stratford School Children Celebrate Liberty Day with Historical Parade

...The school children marched in costume representing the different periods in national history, and they presented a fine appearance. At Academy hill the marchers

dismissed. Not a song was sung and not a speech was made and not a band nor even a drum corps played. How such an oversight could have happened is almost past understanding.

The school teachers and the children deserve credit for the hard work they did in making the parade the picturesque and enspiriting [sic] success it was, but it does seem that it is time the town officials and representative citizens woke up.

One of the interesting features in the parade was furnished by Everett Starr Lewis... [who] wore the cap, powder pouch and canteen that his great grandfather used in the Revolutionary war and also carried his gun.

Stratford Characters—James Curtis

We thought during this hotly contested political season it may be worth noting Stratford's contribution to the national political scene in 1884 and again in 1888.

CURTISS, General James Langdon, formerly candidate of the American party for President, New York city, was born at Stratford, Connecticut, February 19, 1808. The name of Curtiss has been prominent in Connecticut for over two and a half centuries. Young Curtis was educated in the public schools and Academy at Stratford. At the age of sixteen, with all the ambitions and energies of youth he came to New York to seek his fortune. (From *Men of Progress*, 1897).

The New York Times September 19, 1888 MR. CURTIS ACCEPTS.

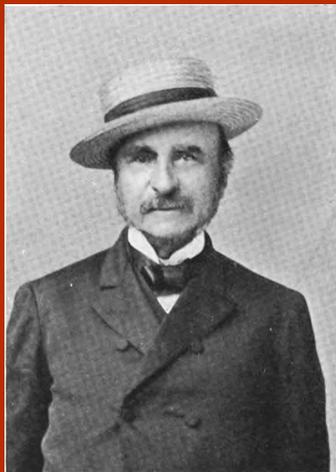
James Langdon Curtis, the nominee for President of the National American Party, yesterday addressed his formal letter of acceptance to the committee of the convention which nominated him. Mr. Curtis accepts all the planks of the platform of the American Party. In his letter of acceptance he, says:

"The platform wisely adopted by the convention has since been communicated to me. I have given it careful consideration, and it meets to the extent to which it goes my full approval.

"The evils and dangers which beset our country and have forced into being the American Party have of late years been growing at an accelerated pace, and have rendered the formation of such a party inevitable. It had only become a question of time, and occasion for bringing it out. The fact that one-fourth of our whole population is either foreign born or the immediate children of the foreign born; that the foreign immigration is now 500,000 yearly, and is pouring in upon us in constantly-increasing floods; that it now largely consists, not of the best, but of the most undesirable classes of all nations, who without fitness for any of its duties, are almost immediately incorporated into our political system, vitiating the national blood, introducing into our industrial systems methods before unknown to us, and wholly of

foreign importation, which disturb, and sometimes threaten our whole commercial and industrial interests; that against these growing interests neither of the old parties seems inclined to offer any resistance, but on the contrary seems each ready to outvie the other courting the foreign vote, under the specious pretext of protecting labor, and that to such extent has it gone that this foreign element is already in many places, dictating the laws, taking possession of our schools, and controlling the local governments of the people, abundantly proves the necessity for our American party, and that the time and occasion for its formation has already arrived.

"The remedy for these evils lies, in a large degree obviously in the restriction of immigration and naturalization. Human governments are but societies on a large scale, organized for mutual protection and improvement, and it is as much the right of a Government as of a society to determine who shall be admitted to membership and who shall not."



James Langdon Curtiss: Presidential Candidate from Stratford. Photo from *Men of Progress*, 1897



Lunchtime at Stratford High from the 1944 *Log* yearbook.

SHS Students complain of lunch food

Sunday Herald October 3, 1943 Hot Election Battle Seen in Stratford

Stratford High school students are putting up a big kick over the food served them at lunch time in the cafeteria.

According to 63 pupils who signed and sent a petition to the town council, the meals have been getting worse by the mouthful.

The matter has been turned over to the board of education, but the pupils are a bit

dubious about getting fast results.

One of them stated: "we've complained before to school authorities and nothing was done. We hope this thing is settled now once and for all."

An “Alternative” Captain Kidd Story 1893

The only “documented” account of Captain Kidd’s visit to Stratford, of which we’re aware, is that contained in William Howard Wilcoxson’s *History of Stratford Connecticut 1639-1939*. It was with great interest, therefore, when we encountered an 1893 “account” of Captain Kidd’s visit to Stratford published in the *Bridgeport Evening Post* on October 10th, 1893.

The 1893 account is fascinating to read as it describes Captain Kidd’s coming ashore in 1696 much more specifically and fully than does Wilcoxson’s account, and also discusses the terror the townspeople felt when they learned Captain Kidd was anchored at Long Beach.

The 1893 account became suspect as we read further about a “telephone call” placed to Bridgeport for assistance in combating the pirates, and, Constable Charles Stagg’s involvement in countering Captain Kidd. Charles Stagg was constable in 1893.

Further, the article states that Company K, which had relocated

to Bridgeport in 1892, was named for Captain “K”idd. On further examination, we noted the author of the article was one “**N. O. Kidder, Esq.**”

Obviously, the account is a parody of sorts. The question is a parody of who or what? The answer to that question will likely never be divined. You may read the entire delightfully entertaining newspaper account at kidd.stratfordhistoricalsociety.info.

Bridgeport Evening Post
October 10, 1893
AN INTERESTING LEGEND.
About the Burial of Captain Kidd’s Treasure, THE INVASION OF STRATFORD.
Said to Have Been Threatened in the Year 1696.

...So starting off as fast as their quaking limbs and palpitating hearts would allow they reached the village, and lost no time in sounding the alarm of the arrival of Capt. Kidd at Long Beach, and prophesying that ere the dawn of day Stratford would be laid in ashes, its men, women and

children murdered, their treasures of gold and silver plate and other bric a brac looted and buried [sic] deep, deep, within the sands of some lonely desert - Long Beach. It is unnecessary to suggest here, that, as a sequence, greatest excitement and consternation prevailed: in short the good people of Stratford were quite shaken up; but, however, Capt. Kidd failed to materialize, as predicted, and in the course of a few days the people regained their usual status of equanimity. But still there existed in the minds of many a feeling that Capt. Kidd was still lurking in the neighborhood—only awaiting a favorable opportunity to swoop down and despoil them of their dearest treasures; and as a result it was decided to call a town meeting for the purpose of discussing the advisability of organizing a militia company, or “Hum guard” for the better protection of the village.

Such meeting was duly called and Judge Morehouse appointed, moderator. It was voted to organize said company and to impress into its service, all male citizens ranging from 18 to 80 years of age, who were the owners of any death dealing weapon...



Howard Pyle's fanciful painting of Kidd burying treasure from Wikipedia

Nurse Rose Baldwin dies from the flu

When the “Spanish influenza” arrived in Stratford in October of 1918, its virulence and lethality seem to have been somewhat diminished in comparison with the rest of the state, and much of the United States. By November 20th, Stratford had only reported twenty flu deaths, and a total of 500 influenza cases. The nationwide flu death rate stood at .5% while Stratford’s death rate was .2%.

The effects of the flu were felt in town, however, and Stratford, lacking a hospital, established a temporary flu hospital in the “Selleck home”. The only Selleck listed in the Stratford City Directory for 1918 was Ida Selleck of 2178 Elm Street. The Selleck home was setup as a temporary hospital on October 21st and continued as such for the next couple of months.

One of Stratford’s earliest flu fatalities, if not the first, was Rose Baldwin. Rose had moved to Stratford from Bridgeport with her parents in late 1917 or early 1918. Rose’s sister, Emiline Lichtenberg, also died of the flu at St. Vincent’s hospital in December of 1918.

The Bridgeport Evening Farmer
October 4, 1918

MISS BALDWIN DIES, A MARTYR TO PROFESSION

Miss Rose Baldwin died at her home, Stratford, yesterday following an illness of about a week, from double pneumonia, following an attack of Spanish Influenza.

Miss Baldwin was a martyr to her profession. She was a graduate of St. Vincent’s hospital nursing school aid [sic] was widely known as a proficient and sympathetic nurse. She had volunteered for war service to the Red Cross and was awaiting call.

A call came from Ridgefield for nurses to assist in nursing some Spanish Influenza cases in that town. One of the prominent families of Ridgefield was stricken with the di-sease. Every member of the family, consisting of two brothers, one a traveling auditor of the New Haven Road, the other a Seminarian, two sisters, one a nurse, and the father and mother were stricken with the disease, the nurse contracting it in the performance of her duties.

Miss Baldwin was not in the best of health, having just finished a very

severe case of nursing, but she promptly answered the call for volunteers, reported for duty to Ridgefield and was assigned to the Roach family.

The duty of caring for all the members of the stricken family devolved upon her. Her unexampled devotion to her profession was shown in her refusal to leave the house when she first manifested symptoms of the di-sease, saying she could not leave un-less relieved. Effort to obtain relief in Bridgeport and nearby towns was unavailing. Only when the disease severely fastened itself upon her was she removed to her home in Stratford where she lingered until yesterday.

She is the second of the graduates of the St. Vincent hospital training school for nurses to die. The first being Miss Stanley who also died while in the performance of her duty, she being stricken almost at the bedside of her patient.

Miss Baldwin is survived by her parents, George W. and Mary Baldwin and a sister, Josephine Baldwin 200 Housatonic avenue, Stratford.

Her funeral will be held with impressive requiem services tomorrow morning at St. James’ church, Stratford.



County Jail Prisoners Digging Trenches for Burial of Influenza Victims at St. Michael’s Cemetery.



Boxes Containing Caskets Waiting For Trench To Be Dug For Burial, St. Michael’s Cemetery,

Photos above from **The Bridgeport Herald**, October 27, 1918

Railroad Workers Vex Widow

BRIDGEPORT EVENING POST

November 20, 1893

DONE THROUGH SPITE. Attempt Made to Cast Calumny Upon His Name

STRATFORD MAN'S DILEMMA

Edward Lynch Finds His Landlady's Dresses in His Trunk.

In Stratford on Friday night Edward Lynch was arrested [sic] charged with drunkenness, breach of the peace and theft. Lynch worked on the railroad and finished there Friday. He was about to start for his home in Easton, Pa. He first sent \$50 home to his wife and family and then started in to enjoy himself on about \$20.

He roomed in Mrs. Henry Blakeman's house and John Sickles was his room mate. The two

were not on the best of terms for the reason Lynch accidentally broke a new hat belonging to Sickles. Both men work on the railroad. As Sickles was leaving Mrs. Blakeman's he emptied the contents of his valise on the floor and invited the house keeper's attention to it saying: "I haven't anything belonging to you but look out for Lynch."

Mrs. Blakeman upon examining her wardrobe found two dresses missing. Lynch had started for the depot and she sent for him. He returned and upon being asked if he had the dresses replied in the negative and hastily opened his trunk and valise, to prove it. He was astonished at finding the missing dresses in his valise.

He told a straightforward story

upon being arrested declaring he knew nothing of the fact that he had the dresses. As he could easily have escaped with the goods instead of going around treating his friends, his story was given credence.

When brought before Justice Peck the charge of theft was nolleed it being strongly suspected the the dresses were placed in Lynch's valise out of spite. Lynch pleaded guilty to drunkenness and breach of the peace, however, and was fined \$10 and costs. He paid up and left for his home in Easton, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Henry Blakeman passed away September 21, 1918. See September's **UPDATE** newsletter.

Bridgeport Daily Standard

October 26, 1868

BURGLARY IN STRATFORD.

-The dwelling house of Mr. Isaac Brooks, near the Railroad station, was entered on Friday night last, an entrance being effected through a rear window. Mr. B. seeing a light in the next room, spoke, thinking it to be some member of the family when the burglars put out the light, and left. They had been into his bed room, had taken his pants out into the next room, and taken from his pocket book two dollars, being all it contained. He had paid his taxes that day, and saved that much money by so doing.

Victory Celebration at Christ Church

Bridgeport Evening Farmer

November 18, 1918

STRATFORD

(Special to The Times.)

Stratford, Nov. 18 —In spite of the stormy weather, old Christ Church was filled to capacity yesterday morning at the Victory service. Among the congregation were a goodly number of the older residents of the town who were present at a similar service soon after Lee's surrender. One lady was heard to remark: "I just had to come today, rain or no rain. You know father played the organ at the Victory service after Lee's surrender."

Co. L State Guard, were the guests of honor and turned out 50 strong, headed by Major Herrmann and Capt. Atwood. The music was rendered by an

enlarged choir under the capable direction of Mrs. Baldwin, organist. The large congregation joined heartily in the hymns, particularly in the national hymn, "God Save Our Native Land," which was sung after the offertory. The Rev. Dr. Smith preached an eloquent sermon, taking as his text, "Giving Thanks Always, for All Things," Eph. 5:20. He commenced with the smaller things of every day life and led his hearers along up through the dark days of the war to the grand day of Victory. He paid deserved tribute to the men of the Army and Navy, stating that one of the great things to give thanks for was that there was not one case on record where our colors had been sullied by an unmanly act of an American soldier.

The church was well decorated, the national colors predominating. In the center of the chancel arch hung a large American flag, flanked on either side by the Union Jack of Britain and the tricolor of France. On the left of the choir was a stand of colors representing Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States. From the organ loft at the opposite end of the church hung a large English flag flanked by the Stars and Stripes on either side. Large American flags were draped from the galleries, four on each side, while the walls on either side of the main entrance were similarly decorated. All in all it was a service long to be remembered by those who were fortunate enough to be present.



Photos to the left and right from the **Bridgeport Herald** of October 13, 1918 and October 20, 1918. Both photos were from town Victory parades.



Witches of Stratford

Sunday Herald
November 7, 1943

Witches of Stratford and Fairfield.

Witchcraft in Connecticut Is Saga of Legal Murder If Woman Floated She Was Condemned to Die
By Harry Neigher

Last Saturday night was Halloween, the harvest-time of mirth, with children laughing, bold, unafraid when told how witches walked the earth. It was an evening's masquerade.

Yet the second law in the catalogue of Connecticut's capital laws, established by the general court in 1642, was the following:

"If any man or woman be a witch, that is, both or one consulteth with a familiar spirit, they shall be put to death. Ex. 22-18; Lev. 20-27; Deut. 18, 10-11."

And that law was the means of recording on the pages of Connecticut history the most regrettable [sic] tragedies of fanaticism in its entire history—the execution of women who were adjudged, by the "brainy" men of the state at that time to be witches and hanged in

public.

Two periods of treating witchcraft severely passed over New England.

The first "witch" case in New England was that of Mary Johnson of Windsor, who was executed in Hartford. (**Editor's note:** Contemporary research has discovered the first witch tried and hung in Connecticut was Alyce Youngs of Windsor).

The second woman to be executed in Connecticut was Goody Bassett of Stratford in 1651. (**Editor's note:** Contemporary research has discovered that Goody Bassett was not the second witch hung in Connecticut).

The general court in session in Hartford in May, 1651, passed this order:

"The governor, Mr. Cullick and Mr. Clarke are desired to goe down to Stratford to keep courts upon the tryal of Goody Bassett for her life, and if the governors cannot goe, then Mr. Wells is to goe in his room."

Goody Bassett was tried and found guilty of being a witch.

She was executed at Gallows

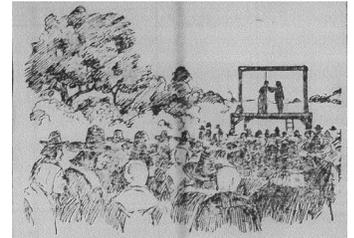
Swamp in Stratford. (**Editor's note:** Later called Gallows Brook which was located approximately where the railroad tracks cross West Broad Street).

When she made her "confession" just a short time prior to her death, she referred vaguely to others who "held their heads full high," but who were as guilty as she.

This was believed to refer to a woman in Fairfield named Goodwife Knapp, and in October, 1653, the latter was arraigned for trial with being a witch.

...This, then, is the story of witchcraft as it once thrived in the towns of Stratford and Fairfield.

It is a gruesome saga of legal murder in Connecticut 250 years ago and it is no small wonder that some of those who sprang from the grand old Puritan stock keep their tongue in cheek when they brag about their lineage, for there isn't much to brag about to have had a great-great-great grandfather who decided the fate of a woman merely by whether she sank or floated in the water.



The Hanging of a Witch. Drawing from the **Sunday Herald**, November 7, 1943.



"IF THE WOMAN FLOATS, she's a witch and must die on the gallows." Drawing from the **Sunday Herald**, November 7, 1943.

Thanksgiving Football Tradition goes wa-a-a-ay back

Bridgeport Evening Post
December 1, 1893

STRATFORD FOOT-BALL.
THE EAGLES WIN FROM OSCEOLAS.—ENTHUSIASM HIGH.

Stratford was the scene of a hard-fought game of football Thanksgiving morning between the Eagle Athletic's [sic] and the Osceolas and the only wish of the admirers of both teams was that the weather would not prevent the contest from taking place as considerable of the "needy" was wagered upon the game, that the Osceolas would not score.

With the exception of being a trifle warm the day was almost an ideal day for football and from early morn until late in the night the town was owned by the crimson colors of the Osceolas and the cry of 'Rah; 'Rah 'Rah! Here we are, Osceolas Ha, Ha, Ha, See," might be heard a distance of half a mile, even the dogs, many of which were bedecked with the crimson, set up a barking, in fact every one seemed to have gone football crazy. Both

teams were confident, the Eagles that they would win, owing to their weight over their opponents, and possibly prevent them from scoring; while on the other hand the Osceolas felt just as confident although lacking in weight their practice would enable them to prove that their opponents' prophecy regarding their scoring would not be fulfilled, which the close of the game showed.

Long before the time for the game hundreds of persons had assembled on the field, and as each of the teams appeared he [sic] crowd would set up a shout for their favorites and the cry of "Here they come," would be heard on all sides. After the referee and umpire had been chosen the toss was won by the Eagles who took the north goal and the game was commenced at 10:30 o'clock. Both sides lined up, with determination set on each countenance: crunch, crunch went their jaws as the on coming mass hurried itself against [sic] the wall of gasping humanity: crack,

crack sounded the joint, yielding to the onslaught. Each time the Osceolas would fall back owing to the superior strength of the Eagles in the first half of the game, who played on the centre [sic] and who would make a gain every time; but the Osceolas, nothing daunted, would reform its ranks and the double row of white faces would line up once more.

After playing twenty-five minutes W. Wheeler made the first touchdown for the "birds," but failed to kick goal. Then above the din was the hoarse shouts of the partisans [sic] of the blues heard, Hobble, hobble, razzle, dazzle, siss, boom, Ah, Eagle Athletic Club, Ra! Rah! Rah" After a short struggle the first half of the game closed without the "Indians" scoring.

The Eagles in the second half forced the fight, and slowly but surely gained yard upon yard nearer the Osceolas' goal and finally W. Wheeler made a touchdown once more, the game

standing 8 to 0 in favor of the Eagles. The line was reformed and there was only half a minute left to finish the game; but Wells punted the ball close to the Eagles' goal, Wheeler got the ball and attempted to punt the ball back, but fate had decided otherwise: Thompson stopped the buckskin, Stagg grabbed it and made a touchdown just as the referees whistle blew. The cry was then heard "Haggerty has saved the day," and then bedlam was let loose. Again, Wells kicked goal and the great game closed 8 to 6 in favor of the Eagles.



Eagle Athletic Club 1893.

Stratford Thanksgiving 1868

On October 14, 1868 President Andrew Johnson proclaimed, "...I, therefore, recommend that Thursday, the twenty-sixth day of November next, be set apart and observed by all the people of the United States as a day of public praise, thanksgiving and prayer to the Almighty Creator and Divine Ruler of the universe, by whose ever watchful, merciful and gracious providence alone States and nations, no less than families and individual men, do live and move and have their being..."

Stratford duly responded as recommended.

The Bridgeport Evening Farmer

November 28, 1868

Thanksgiving in Stratford.

The day of Thanksgiving, in this town, was spent around the festive board by many families who have not been collectively together for years, while others, who had no attractions around the hearth-stone, passed away the hours in riding and walking, although the condition

of the streets and sidewalks was bad, owing to the storm in the morning. Those of a spiritual turn of mind, in the morning visited the Episcopal and Congregational Churches, (the latter named and Methodist Society joining,) where sermons and services took place appropriate to the occasion, which were largely attended notwithstanding the unpropitious state of the weather.

In the evening, the organ concert in the Congregational Church drew out a large and appreciative audience to listen to the excellent selections of music dispensed by this new, fine-toned and powerful organ, under the command of Henry E. Brown, Esq., of New York City, who was long and loudly encored at the conclusion of every piece. To attempt to describe the wonderful musical capabilities of Mr. Brown would be an undertaking which we are not musically competent to do. It is enough to say that he will draw forth a still larger house should be visit us at some future day, which we hope will be the case, and thus

afford our citizens the privilege of hearing a selection of music from the most popular authors and rendered in an artistic style. During the evening, a jewel of a boy, thirteen years of age, who resides in New Haven, played some pieces in a masterly manner, which gave evidence of his wonderful musical talent. At the conclusion of this young man's exhibition of skill he was loudly encored, which brought him to the organ again, when he played the "Last Rose of Summer." The organ, built by Odell & Co. of New York, is a very fine instrument for one of its dimensions, and will be a great acquisition to the musical talent of the church—one which has been long needed. It is placed in a gallery erected for the purpose, behind and over-looking the sacred desk, in the west side of the edifice, fronting the main entrance, which, all will agree, is the proper position. There were many present from neighboring towns who will agree with us in saying that it was an entertainment such as was never before given, and can hardly be

excelled, in this town.

The ball of the military company, on Wednesday evening, was a successful affair, and largely attended by our lads and lassies, as well as hosts of others from Bridgeport, Monroe and elsewhere. Several of the regimental officers were present in uniform. It was the most orderly ball (that is, the parties in attendance,) ever given here, and broke up about four in the in morning.

The foot-race between "Yankee Jack" and the "Giant Ox-slayer" did not take place, owing to the bad state of the roads for pedestrianism. Notwithstanding the two aspirants for the fame which Weston has won were on the spot, wearing faces of disappointment at the prospect, while "the man of stamps" was present, together with a large number of others, to witness the fun in case they travelled. It has been deferred to the next holiday, when it is hoped all things will be favorable to the occasion.

"EPHRAIM."



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**The best we can do about the past is to
keep the memories alive!**

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